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ABSTRACT

Intended to help secondary school students prepare for the New York Board of Regents competency tests in writing, this manual will enable students to use writing for effective communication of their needs and enjoyment of the pleasure of permanent self-expression. The first portion of the manual provides several introductory lessons and writing activities that can serve as a framework for a writing curriculum integrating lessons in literature, the media, listening, and speech. The next section provides specific lessons for (1) the business letter, (2) the picture description, (3) the report, and (4) the persuasive essay. The third section provides guidelines for teacher evaluation, diagnosis and response, followed by a section of techniques for teaching conventions of writing. Appendixes contain training samples from the New York State Preliminary Competency Test in Writing, and a copy of the January 1979 Basic Competency Test in Writing Skills. A bibliography concludes the guide. (HTH)

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Writing Competently

A HANDBOOK FOR TEACHERS

EXPERIMENTAL CURRICULUM BULLETIN 0/3 JANUARY 1980

(To Prepare Students
for the Regents Competency
Tests in Writing)

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WRITING COMPETENTLY, a manual to be used especially with students who need help in preparation for the Regents Competency Test, was prepared as a project of the New York City Board of Education, Division of Curriculum and Instruction. Charlotte Frank, Executive Director (Acting), provided overall supervision and encouragement.

Anita Wilkes Dore, Director of the Center for Communication Arts, Edith Novod, Assistant to the Director, and Muriel Mandell, WEDGE coordinator, organized and supervised the entire project and were directly involved in the preparation of the manual.

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Participants in the WEDGE program, in many high schools, junior high and intermediate schools, tried and reacted to materials which have been included.

A questionnaire distributed to high schools and junior high schools elicited reactions to the competency tests and analyses of student performance which have been helpful in designing this manual.

WRITING COMPETENTLY derives in large part from WRITING EVERY DAY GENERATES EXCELLENCE.

Introduction

This manual charts a course primarily for students who must meet the standards posed by the New York State Regents Competency Tests in Writing.

As with all writing, the emphasis is first on the communication of the ideas, thoughts and information; secondly, on the expression of those ideas; then on structure and organization; and finally on mechanics and appearance (handwriting and neatness).

An analysis of papers on the Competency tests already administered, especially the Basic Competency Tests, shows paucity of content to be a major cause of failure. However, this lack of content is not so much a lack of knowledge or experience of the topic assigned as it is difficulty in expressing one's ideas in writing. The topic on the Basic Competency Tests of January, 1977 asked students to express their feelings about TV commercials, a subject about which the majority certainly had opinions. But a kind of writer's block prevented many students from communicating these ideas on paper. Other problem areas were: understanding of the task, organization of materials, lack of familiarity with writing conventions, standard usage, sentence sense, and spelling.

Frequent opportunities for writing are the surest way to help students with these problems. Frequent writing must be followed by sharing with the teacher and/or students, and by helping to remediate the student's difficulties.

One cannot underestimate the difficulty of adhering to such a program in the average classroom. However, it is possible even here to achieve improvement by establishing certain fundamental principles:

- Create a supportive climate conducive to communication.
- Assign daily writing activities.
- Write along with the class on the same subject as the students, and share it for comment.
- Take advantage of student sharing to provide audience and reaction to writing.
- Provide time for individual conferences in order to understand the nature of the students' problems in writing, and offer encouragement and motivation.

-Use the student's own work as the basis for revision, editing, and proofreading.

-Use the student's own work as the basis for practice in remedial work.

-Respond to student written expression as one would toward oral expression - with exchange of ideas, reaction, and helpful advice.

The goal of this manual is broader than the immediate goal of helping to pass competency tests. It is hoped that it will enable students to use writing for effective communication of their needs and enjoyment of the pleasures of permanent self-expression.

Introductory Lessons And Activities

The lessons and activities which follow are a suggested framework for a writing curriculum. Lessons in literature and the media, listening, and speech activities should be integrated. Carefully planned, they will reinforce the skills of writing. Reading and discussing good prose and poetry will establish sentence sense and effective expression in the best possible way.

Lesson 1. GETTING STARTED*

AIM To introduce the teacher and the students to each other through the use of games which set the tone, create an inviting climate, and give practice in speaking and word play.

DEVELOPMENT

GAME A: Teachers and students introduce themselves.

- Each announces his/her first name, preceded by an adjective.
- The adjective must begin with the same sound as the person's first name (an alliterative adjective).
- Teacher starts off.
- Student #1 repeats what the teacher has said, and adds his/her own introduction.
- Student #2 repeats what the teacher and the first student have said, and adds his/her own, and so forth.

  Examples: Sympathetic Sidney: Cordial Cora

- When memory fails, start the game over again, with the next student becoming #1.

*GAME B: Teacher asks one student: "Are you more like a Volkswagen than a Cadillac? Why?

- Sample response: "I'm more like a Volkswagen - small and thrifty."

Invite the class to respond to this and to other contrasting pairs:

Drum or Guitar	Bread or Cake
German Shepherd or Poodle	Lion or Snake
Pool or Ocean	Raincoat or Swim Suit

*Developed by Charles Chew and Sheila Schlawin, of the New York State Education Department

Lesson 2. MOTIVATING THE STUDY OF WRITING

AIM To explain the renewed focus on writing Discussion of goals for the term with reference to the Regents Competency Tests

DEVELOPMENT

Teacher asks "When does the average person write? Think of when you may need to write something." Try to elicit some of the following:

- You write letters to friends who may have moved away.
- You write cards for birthdays or holidays.
- You write invitations to your friends for parties or dances.
- You write notes to be left for your parents or brothers or sisters. (messages left on the kitchen table, etc.)
- You write notes to your classmates, perhaps to be passed under desks.
- You write notes to classmates or teachers who are absent with prolonged illnesses.
- You send cards when you are away from home.

Explanation of purpose and format of BCT's, PCT's and/or RCT's

Lesson 3. WRITING SAMPLE FOR DIAGNOSIS AND PRETEST

AIM To produce a composition for use in diagnosis and as a pretest

DEVELOPMENT

Teacher asks the class to write, during the class period, a composition on "Why I like (or Dislike) Writing."

- Allow five minutes at the end of the period for re-reading, editing and proofreading.

- This composition may be used as a pretest, and should be preserved to compare attitude and skills with those in evidence at the end of the term. For evaluating, see pp. 38-52.

Lesson 4. THE JOURNAL

The journal, a record of events and feelings as perceived by the writer, serves the function of getting students into the habit of writing, of increasing powers of observation, and of providing an outlet for clarification and expression of personal feelings. Entries need not be read by the teacher but in most instances should be checked in recognition that they have been written. Some entries the student will want to share; some will serve as raw material for later writing. Many students learn to enjoy and depend on journal writing. This activity is enhanced when the teacher writes and shares her/his writing with the class.

AIM To introduce and establish journal writing as a regular activity

DEVELOPMENT

Teacher advises students that this term they will be asked to keep a journal. "You will have the first five minutes of every period (three times a week) or you may write at home and copy your entry in class. Date your entries and keep your writing in chronological order in a separate notebook or folder which you may label or decorate as you like."

The teacher may submit a journal entry of her/his own as a sample.

To facilitate journal writing, begin by asking students to take a separate sheet of paper and write today's date.

- List twenty things you love to do.
- Star the five things you love to do the best.
- Place a check after the things you love to do alone.
- List three events which you read about recently which made a strong impression.

Tell students they now have their own personalized list of topics. When they are stuck, they are to go back to the list and pick one of them to write about for a journal entry.

Ask students to write down something that happened yesterday (something special that they saw or did, or said, or thought about). They are to be specific.

Lesson 5. THE SHORT EXTEMPORANEOUS TALK

AIM To use the newspaper as a source for ideas, especially for journal writing; to use th talk as a quick analysis of student speech patterns

DEVELOPMENT

--Pupils will have selected at home, or will select in class, some piece of news, comment, or opinion in the newspaper to which they react in agreement or disagreemtnt. They may select local or national or international news, a review of a movie, play, or TV show, and opinion in a column, letter, editorial, or cartoon.
--They should prepare to read the lines from the paper and present their own opinion.
--The class may add opinions.
--The teacher may make some private notations on pupils' use of speech.

Lesson 6. OBJECTIVE TEST IN WRITING SKILLS

Many workbook exercises designed to diagnose or give practice in problem areas are ineffective for several reasons. In a multiple-choice exercise, students often score correctly but their own writing has instances of using the very same incorrect forms they appeared to know on the short-answer test. Also, workbooks lend themselves to random practice; it is difficult to match the error to the specific exercise.

The objective test which follows, combined with student writing samples, may be useful in identifying areas in which the student needs help. (p.5')

Name _____ Class _____

Directions: In the paragraph that follows, there are a number of errors in spelling and correct use of current standard English. Each line is numbered from 1 to 15. On your paper, choose one error from each line and write the correction on the sheet in the blanks provided.

Example: A. Their were many happy days in high school. There

1. Not quiet a year has passed since graduation from school. 1. _____
2. I rember all the promises we made to get together. 2. _____
3. Our families seperated us and we all went home. 3. _____
4. I even told my teacher that I would be writting her a letter. 4. _____
5. Its hard to believe that so much time has gone by. 5. _____
6. My best friend in school now live far away. 6. _____
7. I hardly never hear from her. 7. _____
8. Once I seen her on my block and we laughed together. 8. _____
9. We use to have such good times. 9. _____
10. Now there is not as much too talk about anymore. 10. _____
11. Last year we often talk for hours. 11. _____
12. I decided to call up a few freinds from high school. 12. _____
13. that was over a month ago and I still haven't done it. 13. _____
14. I should of called them long ago. 14. _____
15. Maybe i will do it one dav soon. 15. _____

Directions: There are ten omissions in the following paragraph. Supply the missing word wherever it is needed, as has been done in the first sentence.

I. Proof reading

A bank account is important. Every teenager should have account. Starting to save early helps you learn handle money wisely. At bank you will be given passbook. Each you put money in the bank the amount recorded on your passbook. Money goes in is called a deposit. Money that comes out called a withdrawal. Every the bank sends you a statement showing much interest your money has earned.

Lesson 7. DEVELOPING STANDARD PATTERNS OF SPEECH

Because one's language community sets one's language patterns over a long period of development, altering language is a slow process and involves a change of language community. In addition to explicit instructions on "mistakes," the teacher therefore has the responsibility of presenting a model of informal standard usage (rather than of adopting the student's usage). Attention should be called to usage appropriate for particular situations without embarrassing the student and the distinctions between oral and written language are to be taught.

AIM To modify language usage by developing awareness of various levels and by giving models of standard usage.

DEVELOPMENT

Students role play speakers of standard dialect in realistic situations:

- -Looking for a job
- -Returning merchandise
- -Seeking information from an authority
- -Interviewing a grade advisor

For further discussion of this topic, see p. 18.

Lesson 8. MINI-LESSON
DICTATION AS A METHOD OF DEVELOPING SENTENCE SENSE AND PUNCTUATION SKILLS

Dictation is a useful technique for developing sentence sense in those students who ramble on or punctuate erratically.

AIM To develop sentence sense and punctuation skills

DEVELOPMENT

- Select an effective passage for dictation. In so doing, consider the reading level of your group, but give even more weight to the interest level. This may be a section of a story the students are reading.
- The passage read can also serve as a model to demonstrate a particular writing technique you have taught, such as use of physical detail or parallel structure.
- To begin, type the paragraph, eliminating all beginning capitals and end punctuation.
- Hand out a copy to each of the students who need to improve their sentence sense.
- Ask the students to capitalize and punctuate as you dictate.
- Your intonation should be the guide to the students so that they know when and how to end the sentence, and when to capitalize to indicate the beginning of a new sentence.
- If your students are more advanced, you can use a more complete dictation in which the student has to write every word. Since dictation is unfamiliar within the context of most English classrooms, you need to prepare your students fully before you begin to dictate.

For further discussion of this topic see p. 56.

Lesson 9. CONFERENCE ON COMPOSITIONS WRITTEN IN LESSON 3

AIM To review papers written on "Why I Like (or Dislike) Writing," with teacher responses and comments added, and objective test analyzed.

Note: These papers are kept as a pretest for comparison with later work and as a guide to remedial work. (See pp. 39-52 for discussion of evaluating and responding.)

DEVELOPMENT

- After each conference, students will revise their compositions on a separate sheet of paper, clip the revised work to the original, and return them to the teacher.
- The teacher will read to see whether the students have followed suggestions.
- During these initial conference sessions, which may occupy about three to four days, plan reading, writing, and small discussion group activities for the class in addition to the revision.

Lesson 10. MINI-LESSON OR DO-NOW: COPYING FOR SENTENCE SENSE

AIM To assist students in improving their writing by copying good sentences and paragraphs. (Note: some authors have taught themselves to write this way.)

DEVELOPMENT

--The teacher asks the students to find a piece of writing they like in a book, magazine, newspaper or class literature text.
--Challenge them to read and then copy the material, not one or two words at a time but long strings of words, without looking back. (Hint: students should keep repeating the sentences in their minds as they write them.)
--How many times did they have to look back at the original?
--Why did they select the passages they did?

Adapted from Robert Potter, Writing Sense, Globe Book Co, Inc. N.Y.

Lesson 11. FREE WRITING

Free writing is a prewriting technique developed by Ken Macrorie to help students get started writing. It unlocks those who believe they have nothing to say and frees those who freeze because they focus on editing while they are composing. It is the first phase of the total process, which eventually should involve revising and proofreading.

AIM To introduce free writing

DEVELOPMENT

-Teacher explains the process most professional writers go through to shape their work: fast first drafts, rewritings over a period of time, sometimes years. The process shows us that ideas are not clear, not complete, the first time our pens hit paper. The act of trying to write shows us what we have to say.

-Teacher says: "In a minute we will have five minutes of free writing. This means you will start writing at the signal and you will not stop until I tell you to stop. Even if you get stuck you must continue to write. Write: "I don't know what to write, I'm stuck, etc.," but keep writing. Don't be concerned about spelling or grammar or neatness at this point. Don't plan ahead. Just write as quickly as you can."

-Teacher writes on the board, "A Change I Would Like to Make in My School" or some other topic leading to exposition, and says: "This is the topic for this free writing."
-Have students take out pen and paper.

-Focus the attention of the class. Readiness for free writing is important. A half-minute of silence before you give the signal will avoid some students getting a late start or interrupting the group with comments after the signal is given.

-At a signal, students and teacher begin to write. (It may be necessary for the teacher to start a little late and finish a little early in order to monitor and encourage students.) At the end of the five minutes, everyone stops writing.

-Teacher says: "Now read through your own free writing and underline at least one word, idea or sentence that you liked."
-"Now that we have given an initial reaction to our own work, let's also receive reactions from the class to one piece of free writing."

-Teacher writes on the board:
(1) What ideas are presented in the piece? (What it is about?) Summarize it in a sentence or two.
(2) What did you like best?
(3) What do you want to hear more about?

The teacher or student volunteer reads aloud his/her own free writing, or that part to be shared. Teacher asks for volunteers to answer the questions on the board, and jots down the student suggestions on the board. The author of the piece of writing keeps personal notes for future consideration in preparing the first draft.

The class breaks up into groups of four, and each reads, in turn, his/her free writing (or as much as is to be shared). The other students in the group answer questions (1), (2) and (3). The questions are rotated as each pupil reads.

The free writing is put aside for a later lesson (#15) to be the basis of the first draft.

Lesson 12. VOCABULARY LESSON: DOES IT MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

AIM To sensitize pupils to the special qualities of words and to help them to use more precise words in their writing and speaking; to be conscious of the author's use of language

DEVELOPMENT

Have available to the students three dictionaries:

a. a 39¢ one (may be a dollar by now)
b. a high school dictionary
c. an unabridged monster

Teacher asks:

- "Why all three? Why not only one? What's in one? two? three?
- "Who needs all these words? A thing is big or it isn't; medium-sized, maybe. Small, very small. All right, very small, tiny."
- "Open the monster at random, go down a column until you see a word you've never seen before. What is it? And what good is it?
- "Are there words that mean the same thing as each other? If there are, then we should just get rid of them."
- "Would you like to be smart? Why? clever?
  intelligent?
  crafty?
  sly?
  shrewd?
  brilliant?
  penetrating?
  ingenious?
- "Which sounds trustworthy? Which sounds sneaky? Which sounds young? Which sounds older?
- "If you went on a diet and it succeeded, would you want to be slim?
  underweight?
  slender?
  scrawny?
  emaciated?
  skeletal?
  thin?
  cadaverous?"
- "Which one is high fashion and which is malnutrition?
- "All these words mean nearly the same thing: one group is complimentary; one group is derogatory. Why bother to have all of them?"

- "Take the diet list and divide it."

+	-
positive (complimentary)	negative (derogatory)
slender	scrawny
slim	emaciated
	skeletal

"Are there words that are neither positive nor negative?

List them in a third column labeled NEUTRAL (e.g., thin, underweight)."

Try another

- "Which one needs a rest?"
  tired
  worn out
  exhausted
- "A horse gallops. Could an elephant? A hippo? A snake?"
- "A person walks. Wanting to be noticed, he/she parades. To be unnoticed, he/she sidles."

Another

- "Which is most expensive?"
  old
  used
  second-hand
  previously owned
  antique
  ancient
  antiquated
  obsolete
  old-fashioned

One more

- "Would you be making a better impression if you were inexperienced
  young
  immature
  fresh
  juvenile
  up-to-date
  modern?

We've made the point that these words, at least, all have their own reasons for being here, and their own uses.

Note: Use this lesson to raise consciousness toward language, and return to this technique as the need arises. Apply this to the literature being read,

to the newspaper, to the student's own reading, speaking and writing.

Examine your class literature text or a book you've bought or selected from the library. Select a paragraph and pick + and - words.

FOLLOW-UP LESSONS IN VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT
(To be taught,as appropriate, throughout the term)

1. Write a paragraph. Give it to the class. Change it from positive to derogatory, derogatory to positive, by substituting related but not really synonymous words. like scrawny - slender.

2. Teach the thesaurus. Keep several where writing is going on.

3. Write a sample paragraph. The class uses a thesaurus and a dictionary to create a monster: say the same thing in the biggest words you can find; OR

4. The other way around, you create and the students deflate.

Lesson 13. SENTENCE EXPANSION

Sentence expansion is a device whereby the student begins with a kernel sentence and enlarges upon it, in accordance with the instructions of the teacher.

AIM: To write longer complete sentences

DEVELOPMENT

--The teacher writes the following sentence kernel on the board: The man ate.
--Teacher directs students to expand the kernel sentence to show (1) the occupations of the men

(Possible answer: The judges and lawyers ate.)

(2) how the men ate
(Possible answer: The judges and lawyers ate slowly.)

(3) why they ate that way
(Possible answer: The judges and lawyers ate slowly because they were not in a hurry to get back to work.)

(4) what the men did yesterday
(Possible answer: The judges and lawyers, who took only twenty minutes for lunch yesterday, ate slowly today because they were not in a hurry to get back to work.)

(5) why the men did what they did yesterday
(Possible answer: The judges and lawyers, who yesterday took only twenty minutes for lunch because of the importance of the case, ate slowly today because they were not in a hurry to get back to work.)

The point of this kind of exercise is that it enables students to employ their own extensive knowledge of the structure of the language, and provides them with systematic and guided practice in the creation of sentences which are, in large measure, their own.

See p.57 for fuller treatment of this topic.

Lesson 14. SENTENCE COMBINING

Because the possible answers are fewer and more predictable, sentence combining is useful for practice in working with larger structures and in handling pronoun-antecedent relationships through a long sentence. The premise is simple. Students are given two or more short, related, complete sentences and asked to combine them into longer, complete, correct sentences. Doing this helps develop an understanding and fluency in the use of subordination and co-ordination, and shows relationships such as sequence, cause-effect, and so on. Individual or small group work on sentence combining will come after explanations and group practice. How much explaining will be necessary depends on how hard the exercise will be for the group.

As students advance, they should be given harder sentences to combine without guide words or suggestions. Indeed, such an exercise provides an excellent diagnostic instrument to measure growth in mature writing habits. Students who link all the items with and or and so, who use coordination rather than subordination even when stringy, sing-song sentences result, still need guide words or clues in their combining.

AIM: To find effective ways to combine short sentences

DEVELOPMENT

Write on the board: Frank stood at the edge of the board.
Frank took a deep breath.

--How can you combine both into one sentence? By the use of (;) (,and) or by changing it by combining the two. (e.g., Frank took a deep breath as he stood at the edge of the board.)

--Place these sentences on the board:
Frank tensed each muscle.
Frank sprang high in the air.
Frank pointed downward.
Frank shot into the water below.

--Ask the students to see how many different ways they can combine them.

Here the primary purpose is to inculcate the use of a single subject with a series of verbs set off by commas and and. Incidentally, the student should be developing mature writing habits by dropping the repeated subject word.

--Place this pair of sentences on the board and repeat the steps.

Mother smiled.
I passed everything.
--Ditto with this pair.
The audience booed violently.
The villain came on stage.

For fuller treatment of this topic, see p.59.

Lesson 15. REWORK FREE WRITING (LESSON #11) INTO FIRST DRAFT

AIM: To help students to expand and revise their free writing or rough material

Teacher asks students to reread their free writing and look over the notations they have made of their peers' comments. They may use those comments in writing a first draft but, as writers, they are the sole judges of what to include, develop, or change.

Lesson 16. GROUP REACTION TO FIRST DRAFT

AIM: To use small groups to help pupils revise their own papers and develop a critical eye toward others' compositions, and later toward their own

DEVELOPMENT

1. Organizing the class into groups of four and five students can provide feedback for student writing. This not only lightens teacher responsibility for reading every composition but also supplies the broader audience which can possibly motivate the students to write more honestly in the first place, and then to revise and edit their writing.

2. The initial breakdown of the whole class into the smaller units may be more or less random - perhaps based on adjacent seating. Friends, however, should be separated in order to provide fresh, less-biased ears, as well as opportunities for establishing rapport through the sharing of one another's writing.

3. Particularly successful as a follow-up to free writing (see pp. 9-10), grouping depends on each member of the group having a specific task and knowing exactly how to proceed. Young writers can learn to help one another.

4. The bulk of the time devoted to revising the first draft in group sessions should be devoted to revising content and organization as opposed to editing and proofreading (checking usage, punctuation, spelling, etc.).

5. The following questions may be used as a basis for revision:

General Revision Question List

- What part is most interesting? Why?
- Is any part confusing? Which one?
- Do ideas or events follow each other in an order that makes sense? (Are they logical?)
- Is there enough detail? If not, where should the writer add detail?
- Do you feel this paper needs some illustrations or examples to back up a statement or opinion? Where?
- Should any sentence be omitted?
- Is the opening interesting? Is there a better way to begin?
- Is there a good way to end?

Lesson 17.

TO DEVELOP PATTERNS OF STANDARD SPEECH

AIM: To have students listen to and read samples of standard speech.

DEVELOPMENT

-Have students listen to and follow a passage from literature or other books, as examples of good prose writing are read aloud by teacher or peers.
-Have students read aloud standard texts (such plays as "Raisin in the Sun") using language on several levels.

Lesson 18. WRITING A SECOND DRAFT

AIM To write one's composition incorporating the suggested changes and ideas

DEVELOPMENT

Students prepare second draft, taking note of the comments their peers made after they read the first draft.

Lesson 19.

GROUP EDITING AND PROOFREADING SESSION

AIM To learn the technique of editing and proofreading

DEVELOPMENT

It may be helpful to suggest a "plan of attack" for editing papers.

-Working with a partner, the pupil first makes corrections of careless errors of omission and repetition. For example, a student may have written:

"I was going to swimming," omitting the word "go." Or a student may have written "I ran up the hill," repeating the word "ran" unwittingly. Such errors are common and easily corrected.

-The pupil next makes corrections of careless errors of punctuation. (For example, forgetting to capitalize the personal pronoun I; or the names of people, places or things.) The pupils may also correct any random capitalization they may have used in their writing.

-Editing for variety of sentence structure will follow. Edit first for overuse of proper nouns instead of pronouns. A pupil's writing may look like the following:

John is my best friend. John plays ball with me. John is nine years old. I like to play with John. etc.

-Have the pupils replace some proper names with pronouns. Tell pupils to alternate between proper name and pronoun. Corrected paper would read:

John is my best friend. He plays ball with me. John is nine years old. I like to play with him. etc.

-Have pupils edit for overuse of "and" as a connecting word. Have pupils replace "ands" with a comma if they are telling a lot of things that one person is doing.

For example, "Tony plays basketball, runs track, does gymnastics, and swims."

-Have pupils replace "and" with a period and begin a new sentence, if not describing a series of actions done by one person.

-Have pupils see if the word "because" could replace any "ands" to better express a cause-effect relationship.

Lesson 20. FINAL DRAFT

At this point, the teacher reads and responds to the pupil's papers, following the suggestions for evaluation and response (p.39 and p.40), and returns the paper to the students, providing as much individual attention as possible.

After reviewing the writing which students have revised, edited, and proofread, the teacher develops the pupil profiles (p. 50) and plans a program of remediation based on the need.

For specific problems and additional material for full treatment, refer to the following sections:

Grammar
Sentence Sense
Sentence Expansion
Sentence Combining
Dictation
Transitions

Punctuation
- Terminal
- Capitalization
- Comma
- Apostrophe

Spelling

Handwriting

Note: More detailed analysis of problems in these areas and suggestions for remediation may be found in the manual WRITING EVERY DAY GENERATES EXCELLENCE.

AIM Based on the suggestions and response provided by students and teacher, to edit and proofread their papers and prepare a final draft

DEVELOPMENT

Student prepares final draft to be submitted to the teacher.

Lessons

The Business Letter

The Picture Description

The Report

The Persuasive Essay

THE BUSINESS LETTER*

Lesson 1. AIM: To learn the necessary ingredients for writing a good business letter

Writing a good business letter involves the sender's awareness of the letter's effect upon the recipient as well as a knowledge of the proper form.

Students will write better letters if they understand the use of the parts which constitute the business letter, and if they anticipate the attitude of the receiver.

Emphasize the need for accuracy, completeness, and relevancy, as the three essentials of a good business letter.

A. Completeness

Try to find the missing ingredients in each of the following:

(1) Please send me one pair of shoes, style #426, size 8½C. I am enclosing a check for $15.95.

.....

(2) If you will meet me at the corner of 42nd Street and Fifth Avenue on Monday, June 21, we can discuss the proposed trip in greater detail.

.....

(3) I would like to reserve a single room at the Idle Inn. I am enclosing a check for $18.00.

.....

B. Accuracy

In the following excerpts from letters, underline the words and phrases which should be double-checked for accuracy:

(1) I recently purchased a Magni-Mower, model 3562, and would like to have a copy of the Operator's Manual.

(2) If it is convenient, will you call me at 8:30 P.M. on Monday, June 27? My telephone number is (212) 316-4725.

(3) I lost my wallet,black leather, on a BMT train, a local that left Penn Station at approximately 10:15 A.M. on Tuesday, November 2.

*Adapted from Joan D. Berbrich, Writing Practically, (New York: Amsco School Publications, Inc., 1976)

C. Relevancy

Sometimes one can give too much information, which simply confuses and distracts the reader. Consider each of the following situations and the accompanying data. Cross out any items that are irrelevant to the specific situation.

(1) Complaining about a neighbor's dog

barking at night
mother ill, needs sleep
running loose by day
jumping on children
expensive to feed
delivery men won't come anymore
dog is a mongrel

(2) Applying for a job as a small-truck driver

age 24
height 5' 10"
weight 170 pounds
you have trucker's license
you have three years' experience driving trucks
you play the piano
you have perfect vision

This activity may start orally and be followed by a written activity. Students may be asked to select one of the situations listed above and write a written justification of their choice of statement that does not fit.

D. Read the advertisement below.

Green jade or brown tigerseye stone suspended within gold-plated heart. Necklace complete with 18" 14K gold-plated chain. Free catalog with purchase. Money-back guarantee. Allow 2-3 weeks for delivery. $3.98 plus 50¢ postage & handling.

John Rox
P.O Box 1261
Treehaven, N.H. 04567

In this advertisement, which is adapted from the Preliminary Competency Test Training Sample, check only those items which you must include in your order.

Lesson 2. AIM: To learn the importance of correct form

The parts of the business letter have been standardized. There is a reason for following standard form to facilitate appropriate action. Discuss why this is so.

Here is a model business letter written in response to the advertisement in the previous lesson. Copy the letter on the board, or circulate copies.

Elicit from the class and label the parts of the letter: return address, dateline, inside address, salutation, body, complimentary closing, signature. Students using common sense can deduce the reason for each part.

Ask such questions as:

(1) Why include your return address in the upper right? What purpose does this serve?

_____

_____

(2) How is the date (on your carbon copy) meaningful to you? How is it meaningful to the recipient of the letter?

_____

_____

(3) Why include the inside address?

_____

_____

(4) A general salutation (e.g., "Dear Sir" or "Dear Madam") is primarily a courteous gesture. How does the purpose change when the salutation becomes specific (e.g., "Dear Mr. Brown" or "Dear Ms. Jones")?

_____

_____

(5) The complimentary closing, like the salutation, is a matter of courtesy; but that doesn't imply that it isn't important. Why is courtesy in a business letter important?

_____

_____

(6) The signature in an actual letter is usually composed of two parts: (a) the typed or printed name, and (b) the signature (handwritten). What is the purpose of the typed or printed name?

_____

_____

(7) What is the purpose of the signature?

_____

Elicit from the class other appropriate salutations, and the occasions when each is appropriate.

Dear Mr. Brown:	Dear Sir:
Dear Ms. Jones:	Dear Madam:
Dear Miss Jones:	Dear Fellow Citizen:
Dear Mrs. Jones:	Dear Senior:

The "Dear Mr. Brown" form is safely correct for most males; the situation regarding females is more complicated. If a woman has signed a letter as "Miss" or "Mrs." you will, of course, follow her preference. If she has not indicated a preference, use "Miss" or the new form "Ms." which is correct regardless of marital status.

If you do not know the name of the person to whom you are writing, be as specific as possible. For example, "Dear Senior" is better than "Dear Student" if you are writing a form letter to all members of the senior class.

With these few rules in mind, indicate the salutation you would use in each of the following situations:

(1) In a letter to Jim Smith, General Manager of Automobiles, Inc.

_____

(2) In a letter to all voters in your school district

_____

(3) In a letter to Gloria Steinem, an editor of Ms. Magazine

_____

(4) In a letter to TV Guide Magazine Subscription Dept.

_____

Complimentary closings are designed to end a letter gracefully, with courtesy. Below are the four most common. Discuss when to use each form.

Sincerely yours,
Yours truly,
Cordially yours,
Very truly yours,

Discuss the appropriate tone and suitable language for business letters.

Adapted from the N. Y. State Training Packet for the
Preliminary Competency Test in Writing

476 North Allen Street
Syracuse, New York 13205
January 24, 1979

return address

dateline

inside address

Mr. John Rox
P.O. Box 1261
Treehaven, N.H. 04567

salutation

Dear Mr. Rox:

body

Please send me one brown tigereye stone necklace complete with 18 K gold-plated chain as shown in your recent advertisement.

I have enclosed a money order for $4.48 to cover the cost of the necklace, plus postage and handling. Please send the necklace to the above address.

Sincerely,

complimentary closing

Joe Mirsch

signature

THE LETTER OF COMPLAINT

Lesson 3. AIM: To learn the essentials for writing a business letter of complaint

The teacher will initiate a discussion of instances when some error was made by a department store, mail order company, magazine subscription department and the like, by relating some personal experience. Students will contribute examples of their own, perhaps using role playing.

(1) Choose one typical example, and have the class plan a cooperative letter to the company.

- Write down all the particulars of what was promised (in the ad, commercial, etc.).
- Write down a description of the object or service received, what was wrong with it, and why you are dissatisfied.
- Indicate what you plan to do (return the object, etc.).
- Indicate what you expect the company to do (replace, refund, repair, etc.).

(2) Discuss such matters as what the proper tone should be (moderate, reasonable, calm, polite).

(3) Establish the proper format.

(4) Have the letter written on the board and then copied in pupil notebooks, along with the criteria for the letter of complaint.

Follow-up

Ask the class to write individual letters of complaint on a topic such as the following:

> Referring to the advertisement in Business Letter Lesson #1, imagine that the order arrives with a broken chain. Ask students to write the appropriate letter of complaint.

Other Possible Activities

Each student pretends that he/she is the manager of a business (examples: electric company, department store, railroad, bookstore). The teacher helps the students to imagine concrete situations requiring business correspondence. Students write, receive, and answer letters of order, complaint, and adjustment; applications for employment: letters of recommendation: and letters of thanks for recommendations.

Each pupil chooses presents for members of his/her family from newspaper and magazine advertisements. Advertisements are pasted in the notebook and analyzed for information needed to write letters of order--address, size, color, style, price, and tax. Students plan and write the letters.

Individual students or committees plan an extended trip and write the required letters to travel agencies, oil companies, railroads, airlines, hotels, and chambers of commerce. If students prefer a more realistic situation, they may plan a local trip to a place of interest in the New York City area.

Pupils write to publishers for book jackets to be used in a display.

THE PICTURE DESCRIPTION

Lesson 1. AIM: To write a description of a picture

Imagine you are a reporter assigned to cover an accident. You reach the spot and take a picture of the scene below.

Now you are ready to write your story to accompany the picture. Write five sentences which will give the following information:

Who is involved?
What happened?
When did it happen?
Where did it happen?
Why did it happen?

This is a mnemonic called the Five W's which is used in journalism.

Follow-up

(1) For other examples, refer to question IV on the Basic Competency Tests. A sample is to be found in the appendix, p.82.
(2) Look for the news items in the newspapers. Read the lead (opening paragraph) and list the Five W's.
(3) Ask students to bring in pictures (their own, or photographs clipped from newspapers, or posters). Write a paragraph using the Five W's.
(4) Write a news item with five sentences, using the Five W's, on an event which happened in your school or class.

Picture from Robert Potter, Writing Sense (N.Y. Globe Book Company, Inc.)

PREPARING THE REPORT

Lesson 1. AIM: To organize a report in a logical form

Brainstorm a topic such as Causes of Automobile Accidents.

For example students may offer the following:

- Faulty brakes
- Poor roads with potholes
- Drunken driving
- Poorly lit roads
- Signal lights out of order
- Inexperienced driver
- Bald tires
- Too many noisy passengers in the car
- Sleepy driver

To illustrate how to organize these apparently random ideas, demonstrate organization by classification. This is accomplished by organizing the contents of a pocketbook, a wastebasket, or a bag of small toys such as cars, trucks, planes, miniature people, etc. Group the items according to type.

Now return to the list of causes of accidents and group as follows:

- Road problems
- Car problems
- Driver problems

Now list the items under the appropriate heading.

Prepare a cooperative report on the board following the outline just prepared on the Causes of Automobile Accidents.

Lesson 2. AIM: To write a report for a social studies class

*You have been asked to look up some information on the Mayan Indians of Central America and write a brief report for your social studies class. You took the notes included in the box below.

Ruins of large cities of stone still remain
Mainly in southern Mexico and Guatemala
Studied moon, planets, stars
Played a kind of ball game on stone courts
Corn and other crops raised for food
Kingdoms about 300 A.D. to 1300 A.D.
Had picture writing
Way of life gone before Columbus came to America

Organize the items as you did with the report on accidents according to such headings (suggested by the class) as:

Location
Time kingdom existed
Occupations
Means of communication
Leisure activities

The class will slot the notes under the appropriate heading. After agreement is reached, students will write up the report in complete sentences, with proper paragraphing, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and usage. Variations in order are possible as long as the writer can defend the order as logical.

Pupils will check each other to see that all information is included.

Pupils will exchange papers with each other to verify proper form conventions before handing papers in.

*From the New York State Training Packet for the Preliminary Competency Test in Writing, 1979.

THE PERSUASIVE ESSAY

Lesson 1. AIM: To write a piece influencing someone to to share your opinion

Arrange the class in a circle around the room, so that everyone's actions will be visible to the group.

Tell the class that you are going to make some statements and that everyone will have an opportunity to respond to the statements, as follows:

If you strongly agree with the statement, raise your right arm in the air and rotate your wrist.

If you agree with the statement, raise your right hand level with your shoulder.

If you disagree with the statement, drop your right arm to your side.

If you strongly disagree with the statement, drop your right arm and rotate your wrist.

If you have no opinion or feel so-so about the statement, fold your arms on your chest.

Now for a practice round, show me what your arm motions are for:

strong agreement
agreement
no opinion
disagreement
strong disagreement

Listen to each statement. I will stop after I read one, and you will react to it; then I will go on to the next one.

Teachers should be graded every year by their students, and if they don't get a good grade they should not be rehired.

Parents know what is right for their children.

If women were the heads of state, there would be no wars.

The gas crisis is the result of profit-taking by the large companies.

The major cause of crime is poverty.

Smoking is a personal decision even if it is hazardous.

For older, more mature students,you can add other pot-boilers, such as mercy killing. Add statements about any topics that will polarize students.

Now that you "voted," take one topic that you either strongly agreed with, or equally strongly disagreed with. Using the free writing technique, you will have ten minutes of writing to convince your fellow classmates of your point of view.

Write for ten minutes and then form into groups. The group members will assist the writer, using the following:

Summarize the opinion.
What are the arguments used?
What other information or evidence do you need to convince?

The major components of persuasive writing are:

(1) Structured, logical arguments
(2) Sense of audience
(3) Evidence (examples,statistics)
(4) Clarity and forceful expression

LOGICAL ORGANIZATION

Lesson 2. AIM: To write a cooperative paragraph which demonstrates the principles of organization, using a topic from the previous lesson: Smoking is a personal decision even if it is hazardous to health.

My uncle smokes incessantly and won't give it up. Cigarettes cost much more than they used to. He has asthma. He spends a lot on smoking. He coughs all the time. Sometimes he smokes at night, lying in bed. He complains about shortness of breath. Once he fell asleep with a cigarette still lit. He is tired all the time. His young children say they want to start smoking. Manufacturing cigarettes uses power, labor, and farmland which could be used for other purposes. The pillow began to smolder. His children want to do the things he does. He woke up because he smelled the smoke and he put the fire out.

This paragraph gives several reasons why the writer's uncle should stop smoking.

Are the reasons in logical order?
Do all these reasons belong in the same paragraph?
How can they be arranged so that they are more convincing?
What is the best way to arrange ideas so that they are most effective in getting a reader to agree with them?

How to start

(1) Write each separate reason down, one reason to a line.

(2) Read over your reasons and decide whether there are any more you want to add.

(3) Try numbering your reasons in the order of importance to the audience you have in mind. Remember that for each intended piece of persuasive writing, you have some particular person or group you want to persuade. And each person or group has some concerns which are immediate and essential and others which can be ignored for a long time without its making much difference.

(4) Let's go over these steps using the sample paragraph above:

My uncle smokes incessantly.
He coughs a lot.
He is short of breath.
He has asthma.
Cigarette prices have gone up.
He once started a fire smoking in bed.
His young kids want to smoke, because he does.
Cigarette manufacturing uses power, labor and farmland.

(5) Do I want to add any more reasons?
Each pack of cigarettes has a warning printed on it that smoking can be "hazardous to your health."

(6) What is the order of importance to my uncle?
All the reasons are good reasons, but some are immediate and some are long range and a bit remote from his personal concerns. Dying is more personal than spending more for his pleasure; so are being sick and setting an example for his children. So certainly the last item should be the use of electric power, labor and land.

Here are the ideas rearranged in a more logical order. (Remember that "logical" means in the best order to convince the audience you're writing for. Change your audience and you should change your emphasis and your wording.)

My uncle smokes incessantly.
He has asthma.
He coughs a lot and is short of breath.
He once started a fire smoking in bed.
Cigarette prices have gone up.
His young kids want to smoke too, because he does.

The sentence about power, labor and farmland can be left out of this paragraph. If my uncle didn't smoke, plenty of others still would; his quitting won't change the world. But it will change his life, and the rest of the sentences are about the changes that will affect him.

Now we are ready for step #7. We have to write a topic sentence for the paragraph. What is the point of this paragraph? What should my uncle do? The answer is obvious; he should stop smoking. So that will become the topic sentence, and the paragraph is now completed.

> My uncle should stop smoking. He smokes incessantly now and he has asthma and coughs a lot and complains about shortness of breath. Once, he fell asleep with a cigarette still lit and set his pillow on fire. The pillow began to smolder and he woke up just in time to put the fire out. The prices of cigarettes have gone up, too, so he is spending more to risk making his health worse. His health is not all that is threatened, because now his young children want to smoke too, because he does it and they want to do the things he does.

Now the students are ready to return to their original free persuasive writing and revise it, using the principles of organization developed in class.

AUDIENCE AND TONE

Lesson 3. AIM: To learn to make appropriate choice of tone and language to suit specific audience to be persuaded

As a requirement for the gym class, every student in your school has to purchase a uniform. These uniforms are sold only in the school store, where they cost $6.50 apiece. When you examine the uniforms, you see that they are really nothing more than regular, standard-brand athletic wear that can be bought in a store nearby for $5.00. The only difference is that the school name is not printed on the stuff sold in the store. You claim that you should be allowed to buy at the lower price, so long as what you buy is safe for use in the gym and you are willing to take care of putting the school name on your gear. You tell the head of the physical education department what you want, but the department head says that the principal is the only one who can give you permission. You feel that it is unfair for you and for all the students to be forced to pay more than the market price for something the school requires.

Do you want to inform the principal of your feeling, beg permission, threaten a student boycott or a scandal, or persuade the principal that what you want is reasonable?

Role play this as:
- -an interview with the principal
- -a meeting with the PTA
- -a meeting with the student council

How do the tone and language change in each instance?

What must one consider in deciding on the tone? (appropriate language, tone of voice, examples, et al)

REWRITING

Lesson 4. AIM: To rewrite composition, keeping in mind the audience, tone, and structure;
To add examples and statistics for effectiveness

Form groups of 4; read to each other and respond to the following questions:

- -Who is your audience?
- -Is the tone appropriate?
- -Are your reasons clear?
- -Are they logically developed?
- -Could you convince me to change?
- -Do you need more information? Research? Expert opinion?

Classes will revise papers and then follow the procedures of editing and proofreading.

Follow-up

Assign other persuasive compositions, using topics from literature as well as from social studies, science, health education and other disciplines.

Use the media as a source for discussion, motivation, and writing.

Teacher Evaluation, Diagnosis And Response

1. EVALUATING WRITING

New York State requires that the holistic scoring system be used in grading the competency tests in writing. This system evaluates the total effect of the writing, the combined impact of both the content and the manner of expression. It is true that the reader's impression of the writing may be negatively influenced by the occurrence of many errors in spelling, syntax, or organization. However, the separate elements are not as important as the overall quality of the response.

The three writing samples required on the competency tests (the business letter, the report, and the persuasive composition) are scored separately, and an average is computed. Ideally, to make for greater reliability, the writing task should have been graded by at least two readers. The scores are essentially a screening device to identify those students who need special remedial instruction.

Determining the kinds of remediation that are required will involve not only the scores but the papers themselves. It is to be hoped, therefore, that the English teacher will have access to the writing samples as well as to the scores, and will examine the failures analytically. In any case, whether or not there is access to the test papers, the competency test should be supplemented by other samples of student writing, produced under more relaxed conditions. This supplementation is essential to the planning of a full-scale remediation program for a student.

2. RESPONDING TO WRITING

Whether or not you grade, if the primary goal of your evaluation is to motivate more willing and more effective writing, respond to most student writing with thoughtful, non-threatening, supportive comments. Criticism that is too harsh, too frequent, or too premature can be destructive. But extravagant, overgeneralized praise can also be harmful.

Focus first on content, on what the student has tried to communicate or express. Positive comments can take the form of a restatement of what the student has said: "It is difficult to have a part-time job and be a full-time student." "You really understand your younger brother." Or you may express interest and encourage further communication by volunteering relevant information about yourself: "I, too, like to be alone at times."

It is sometimes helpful to write comments in the form of questions. If the student's paper is short on content, for instance, ask a question which will provide more information: "Which school do you like better? Why?"; or "What was the first thing you noticed when you entered the disco?" It is wise to limit questions on content to one or two.

2. RESPONDING TO WRITING (Continued)

The second area of concern should be the quality of the writing -- its honesty, vividness, purposefulness, clarity, power, and appropriateness. Specific positive comments enable the students to replicate whatever is good in their future papers. For example: "Your use of detail to describe the first moments of the blackout really made me see your block and feel the way you were feeling."

If the student's paper lacks organization, number some of the sentences in the paper and write: "Which of these sentences go together?" "Which of these sentences should you write first?... last?"

If the paper lacks unity, you might write: How is this sentence related to your topic?"

As in the case of content, it is wise to limit your questions about organization to one or two areas.

Finally, attend to the mechanics and technical errors. Correct some technical errors, but not many. Too many corrections discourage students; too few communicate an unrealistic sense of perfection. Isolate a technical area that needs immediate attention because of its frequency or its importance to communication: "Work on sentence punctuation." "Avoid overusing 'and'." If possible, help cluster spelling errors to determine the cause of errors and the appropriate learning strategies. These skills areas can be placed as monthly student goals on sheets that have been affixed to student folders.

Occasionally the suggested order of response (content, quality of writing, organization, mechanics) may be reordered. If the striking aspect of the paper is the style, that may be the first comment; i.e., "You have given an overwhelming sense of the mood of loneliness." Or, if the paper is so illiterate or poorly written that it can't be read, you may wish to say or write "I am interested in what you have to say but I find it difficult to read. Please read it to me."

2. RESPONDING TO WRITING (Continued)

Obviously, not every aspect needs to be attended to in every paper. But in every paper the student should be aware that the teacher is interested in what he or she has to say, and is responding as in a two-way conversation. Lengthy comments are not always possible. But try to make more than superficial comments when possible, especially on papers written early in the term, to set up a climate of mutual exchange.

3. IDENTIFICATION OF STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

The same writing that calls for supportive response may also begin to provide insights into the student's strengths and weaknesses and to suggest possible areas for instruction. However, long-term courses of remediation should not be charted on the basis of a single piece of writing. The particular writing may not be indicative of writing abilities or skills in another assignment, on another day, with different motivation and opportunity for revising and editing. At best, one piece may indicate a series of trial lessons or tentative strategies.

If the student failed to write on the topic assigned, was it because the assignment itself was ambiguous? Or did the student fail to comprehend a straightforward question? If the writing was unorganized or inadequately developed, was it lack of knowledge or interest in the particular topic? Did the writer simply put the ideas down as they came to mind, or was there a plan before the writing? Did the writer reread the paper and edit? Did he/she know how to organize and develop the narrative, report, explanation or argument? Does the lack of terminal punctuation in a particular paper stem from careless haste or from lack of sentence sense?

Since the nature of the instruction will differ, analysis of student papers must be supplemented by observation of the students while they write. In addition, conferences with the students about their writing -- even if merely a word or two at their desks -- are necessary during the various stages of composing and editing. Whatever the findings, they should be shared judiciously

3. IDENTIFICATION OF STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES (Cont.)

with the student, a few at a time, preferably in the order of their importance for communication and the relative ease with which they lend themselves to remediation. A lengthy recital of errors will serve as a deterrent rather than a stimulus to further writing and may transfer the student's focus from the communication of ideas to concern with correctness. The student may become too careful, too afraid to take the risk that leads to more mature writing.

The function of diagnosis is to give guidance to the teacher. Records may be kept in the form of checklists, or profiles, or simple notes in narrative form; they are to help the teacher plan remediation for the individual, the group, and the class.

4. WRITING SAMPLES

Assignment: The experiences that we remember are usually those that were particularly happy, sad, fearful, embarrassing, or triumphant. Write about one such experience, describing both what happened and how you felt when it happened.

(You have 20 minutes to write and 5 minutes for rereading and correcting.)

Writing Sample A

the saddess experiences was when my ~~g~~grandfather died. WE was planning on visting my Grandparients for the summer because we haven't seen them for more then nine years. What ~~hurt~~ hurt my the most was that they let us know that my Grandfather was dead ~~was~~ a couple of days after he was dead when we got ~~on~~ on the plan to go to O.R when we got there ~~&~~ they had buried him already I'd didn't get to see my Grandfather. ~~I~~ I felt left out of of something I knew that my family shouldn't have been left out at all

Response to student: (Written or oral during brief conference)

Your paper conveys your feelings very sensitively and I sympathize with you as I too remember my grandfather with love, although I can't remember his death at all. How old were you when your grandfather died? Did you remember him after not seeing him for nine years, or did you feel sad for your family? What was he like? What happened when you saw your grandmother? Tell us more about that visit. I'm not sure what you mean by "they" -- make it clearer. Also, you left out a few of your periods and so I'm a little confused about what you mean.

Diagnosis for teacher use: (notes like these or a checklist like that on p.50)

Content:

Student understood task and responded with honestly and sensitively written experience.

Organization and Development:

Adequate narrative sense but details meager.....Ask questions to elicit more .....

Word Choice:

Simple but appropriate

Sentence Sense and Usage:

Verb problem.....we was; we haven't for hadn't

Tense shifts but also used correctly elsewhere

Proofreading needed

Try patterning as indicated

Mechanics:

Random capitals confusing-- Handwriting error or knowledge of punctuation rules?

Upper and lower case letters confused. Guide sheet might help.

saddess for saddest (carelessness, pronunciation, superlatives)
plan for plane (carelessness or long vowel rule)
visting for visiting (carelessness or pronunciation)

Assignment The experiences that we remember are usually those that were particularly happy, sad, fearful, embarrassing, or triumphant. Write about one such experience describing both what happened and how you felt when it happened.

(You have 20 minutes to write and 5 minutes for rereading and correcting.)

Writing Sample B

I felt happy, overfulling, thrilled, tearful, glad and happy. Oh my graudations. When they call all student on stage. To get their papers. We went up there one by one. What was so funny about it. I was the only student girl without a hat. My mother and Annt pick me and They says when my turn come up. I was so nervos that I had shaking with the wrong hand. "Well", its take me 5 min to get it right. Before I get off stage, my annt gave me a big bouquet of flowers I was so surpries that I almost cried. The people took pictures of me and my annt

Response to student:

Big moments often make us nervous before they come, but somehow things sort themselves out. When you're happy and the people around you are happy, all the things you worried about turn out not to be so serious. I'll bet you still have the pictures.

Let's reread this together and see where you want to start one sentence and end another.

Diagnosis: for teacher use:

Content:

Effectively conveys situation and emotion

Organization and Development:

Narrative sense adequate

Word Choice:

Risk taker-- uses vocabulary effectively although not always correctly

Sentence Sense and Usage:

No sentence sense-- try reading her paper to her.
Follow by dictation of short paragraph from literature by another student.
Check journal writing--- have her keep it short at first.

Mechanics:

Illiterate-- dictation helpful? Needs step by step remediation but not to dampen writing spark

Assignment: Perhaps your school has a problem which you feel can be corrected. It may deal with the lunchroom, programming, textbooks, or something else.

Write a letter to your school newspaper stating the problem as you see it and suggesting what should be done.

WRITING SAMPLE

Dear Editor:

I feel the LUNCHROOM PROGRAM is Ridiculous the LUNCHes ARe UN-SUITABle foR My tASTes AND My fRIENDs thINK it stINKs The MEAT is Not KOSheR it lOOK liKe, quote "GROUNded RAt" unquote.
The best thing they hAVe is the bologNA ANd cheese ON A Roll, and The tACOS. ANd MilK but sometimes EVEN the MILK IS SOUR.
Most of the food ENds UP in the tRASH ANYWAY.
I KNOW A boy who goes to HUNTER JUNIOR High School AND GETS McdONAlds food right FROM the building AND, it would cost less than outside; STORE McdONAlds ANd the School split pROFits.
Sounds Good To Me!!!!

Thank you
Pat Doe

Response to student:

Nobody ever praises school lunches, but you certainly make this one sound awful. Would you like the limited menu of McDonald's every day, or would you rather have the choices on your school list prepared in a more appetizing style? Your writing is lively and holds my interest.

I'm not always sure where your sentences end or begin. Look at them again.

Diagnosis for teacher use:

Content:

Attended to task but with more heat than light. Few specifics.

Organization and Development:

Presented problem and suggested solution but didn't think through before writing... no logical order to details.

Word Choice:

Appropriate for school newspaper?

Sentence Sense and Usage:

Random capitalization -- handwriting problem?

Quotation error -- needs instruction

Illogical sentences and fragments.....failure to proofread?

Subject-verb agreement error.... also proofreading?

Assignment: Write a composition on the following topic: "How to Make a Mess"

After you finish writing, reread your paper and make corrections.

How to Make a Mess

Messing is my specialty
If there was a subject
Keeping your room
messy I would get A.
I'm so good at messing
rooms that I might
even open a messing
bussiness. Between me
and brother and toys
my room is a disaster
area. When we finish
fighting my room looks
like it has just got hit
with a atom bomb.
well I clean it up
after and it starts all
over again.

Response to student:

I'm super neat myself but I secretly admire the courage and dash of many people. Your paper has wit and spirit.

If you reread it you will probably catch such minor errors as "bussiness," "start's." You may find others.

Diagnosis for teacher use:

Content:

Wit and ability to express it on paper

Organization and Development:

Good expository piece, nicely developed

Word Choice:

Good

Sentence Sense and Usage:

Good sentence sense and usage. Used "a" for "an" before vowel.

Mechanics:

Check failure to capitalize sentence beginnings. Carelessness, handwriting?

Give mnemonic for business.

Call attention to apostrophe error (start's)

Focus on proofreading, perhaps first with another pupil.

Encourage writing for school papers and contests as motivation for checking.

STUDENT WRITING PROFILE

NAME _____ SCHOOL _____ GRADE _____

The student needs help in:	Writing Samples Dates _____		
Understanding the assignment			
Knowing what the topic is			
Knowing something appropriate to say about the topic			
Knowing how to address the paper to the intended audience			
Organizing the paper			
Demonstrating a general plan			
Dividing the paper into paragraphs where appropriate			
Making transitions between ideas(or parts)			
Making logical generalizations from examples given			
Giving appropriate examples, reasons, details - to support generalization			
Including only relevant details			
Following correct form, where form is a factor - business letters, etc.			
Choosing the best words			
Using an appropriate vocabulary			
Using correct forms of words			
Maintaining consistent levels of usage			
Using specific words			
Using words accurately			
Sentence Sense			
Writing complete correct sentences			
Using more than one type of structure			
Using punctuation to vary sentences			
Mechanical skills			
Spelling correctly			
Using punctuation correctly			
Using capitalization correctly			
Writing legibly			
Proofreading Skills			

PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING A ONE-TO-ONE WORKSHOP*

Go through these steps in every conference.

- Develop a comfortable working rapport with the writer.

  Work toward a writer-responder relationship rather than a student-teacher relationship.

- Determine whether or not the writer understands the assignment.

  Ask: "Do you understand the assignment? Can you tell me about it in your own words?"

- Determine whether or not the writer has a clear sense of his/her audience and purpose.

  Ask: "Who might be reading this? Parents? Friends? Readers of the school newspaper?" (Try to avoid naming the teacher as sole audience.)

  Ask: "What is your purpose? Do you aim to explain? Persuade? Express your feelings?"

Go through these steps when the writer does not have a draft.

- Explore with the writer how he/she might go about gathering or producing ideas and materials.

- Explore with the writer some possibilities for organizing the ideas and materials.

Go through these steps when the writer has a completed draft.

- Ask the writer to read the draft aloud to you.

  In rereading the draft aloud to an immediate audience, the student

* Adapted from a workshop conducted by Charles R. Cooper and Ann Matsuhashi at a conference sponsored by the N.Y.S. Department of English Education in Albany in May, 1979.

often sees the piece anew and is able to correct jumbled sentences, non-standard features, missing words, and even recognize larger problems of organization.

— Help the student to revise the draft.

Primarily through skillful questioning and by responding as an attentive listener, help the writer to recognize and solve problems in the draft such as organizing, adding detail, clarifying, sentence-combining or simplifying, and diction.

— Help the student to proofread the draft.

The final step involves a careful polishing activity, during which the teacher and student look for mechanical errors and prepare the piece to be read by others.

Techniques For Teaching The Writing Conventions

1. GRAMMAR

Through the smoke surrounding the battles over the teaching of grammar and the study of the way language is used, these points emerge. Instruction in grammar, as part of a program to improve writing, must be an outgrowth of observed student need and must be aimed at overcoming very specific problems with priorities based on their importance to the particular student's ability to communicate.

Time spent on theories of grammar and exercises identifying parts of speech or forms, or on "canned" workbook lessons on usage, is probably wasted and certainly does not improve writing.*

The teaching of grammatical items should follow student writing and teacher diagnosis--and then be integrated with editing and proofreading. The major function of such instruction in a writing program is to provide the students with practical strategies for checking their own writing--to help students learn how to edit their own work.

The workbooks available to the teacher should not be permitted to dictate the curriculum. Group lessons are taught and practice is assigned only as warranted by the group's needs. Otherwise, instruction should be aimed only at those who need it, with the reasons for grammatical errors considered in the design of instruction. The same mistake may indicate carelessness in one writer but reflect variant usage in another.

*"The teaching of formal grammar has a negligible or, because it usually displaces some instruction and practice in actual composition, even a harmful effect on the improvement of writing."

Richard Braddock, Richard Lloyd-Jones and Lowell Schoer, Research in Written Composition (National Council of Teachers of English Urbana, Ill. 1963) pp. 37-38.

The first student will require application of proofreading skills; the other will need grammatical explanation, and possibly practice exercises, at the appropriate level of sophistication.

The instruction should go no deeper than it must for students to cope with the error. A student who writes "we was" or "he run" will not profit from pages of exercises on subject-verb agreement or on past tense. Student attention can be focused by an explanation of the standard usage, practice on the isolated item (ideally with samples from student writing), and the development of a mnemonic chart or diagram for reference during editing and proofreading. And the achievement of mastery will be demonstrated not by a score on a short answer test but in the improvement of writing.

It is the contention of many that older students do not learn formal English in the same way they learned their mother tongue. Although speech comes before writing, writing need not be bound by the competencies of speech and certain forms or corrections can become part of a person's writing competency without necessarily being incorporated in his or her speech.*

*Mina P. Shaughnessy, Errors and Expectations (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977)

However, because one's language community sets one's language patterns over a long period of development, altering them is a slow process involving a change of language community. In addition to explicit instructions on "mistakes," the teacher therefore has the responsibility for presenting a model of informal standard usage (rather than adopting the student's usage), calling attention to usage appropriate for particular situations without embarrassing the student and teaching the distinctions between oral and written language.

The following activities are designed to modify language usage by developing awareness of various levels and by giving models of standard usage.*

-Students listen and follow the text, as examples of good writing are read aloud by the teacher or peers.
-Students participate in choral reading of prose.
-Students read aloud standard texts. (Such plays as "Raisin in the Sun" use language on several levels.)
-Students role play speaker of standard dialect in realistic situations.

*Adapted from James Moffett and Betty Jane Wagner's Student Centered Language Arts and Reading, K 13

2. SENTENCE SENSE

No doubt all teachers of composition have at some point been tempted to fantasize the coming of a fairy godmother whose magic wand would at once eliminate run-on sentences, banish inappropriate fragments, and render only perfectly constructed sentences to issue from the pens of their students. Mere analysis of sentences will not develop sentence sense, nor will the study of formal grammar produce it. The student for whom sentence sense is a problem will probably benefit most from extensive practice in sentence construction.

3. THE COMPLETE SENTENCE

Customarily, the basic sentence-sense problems of students have been attacked in three traditional ways; depending on the circumstances, any or all of them may be to some extent useful.

a) First, the sentence-sense errors in the student's own writing may be corrected. However, merely to write "frag." or "run on" is to waste effort. The student learns best through his/her own doing and not from the teacher's labeling.

Among the types of sentence errors, the two most common and serious are:

- writing part of a sentence as a whole sentence (fragment)
- writing two or more sentences as if they were all a single sentence (run-on sentence)

If a student writes the following:

- "I saw him going down the road. As far as his legs would carry him."

the teacher should encircle it with the comment, "Rewrite as one sentence."

b) In addition to correcting the sentence-sense errors in the student's own writing, there is the popular device of giving students practice in correcting sentences in workbooks, etc. Unfortunately, the problem with this technique is that

it relies on the students' analysis of sentences that are not their own, and on correction of mistakes they themselves never made.

c) The third approach, which seems to confront the problem of faulty sentences most directly, is the teaching of what a complete sentence is. The student is taught that the completeness of a sentence can be tested by five criteria:

subject, predicate, complete thought, initial capital letter, and terminal punctuation

The "complete" in "complete thought" is the same elusive element as the "sense" in "sentence sense."

Along with the tried and tested ways of handling basic sentence-sense problems of students, there have developed some excellent concomitant methods aimed at reducing or eliminating these errors, namely, Sentence Expansion, Sentense Combining, and Dictation.

4. SENTENCE EXPANSION

Sentence expansion is a device whereby the student begins with a kernel sentence and enlarges upon it, in accordance with the instructions of the teacher. (You may select sentences from the student papers, Lesson No.3, p.2.)

The point of this kind of exercise is that it enables students to employ their own extensive knowledge of the structure of the language and provides them with systematic and guided practice in the creation of sentences which are in large measure their own. If the full benefit of this exercise is to be realized, you must have some kind of monitor process so that errors do not go unchecked and thus create new errors.

Sentence expansion lends itself to gaming devices. For example, "Expansion Relay" calls for six groups of five/six students. All students receive a rexo paper with the same expansion exercise, accompanied by six directions. The first student of each team rushes to complete the first

directive on his/her team's assigned place at the board, and hands his/her team's piece of chalk to the teammate who'll complete the second directive, based on what the first team member has written. etc. The last team to finish are the "Fragments."

Introducing expansion to a class can be fun. The teacher writes "Paul called" on the center of the chalkboard and summons each member of the class to add on to the sentence. When "Tall Paul, who is often very angry with his parents, called his Uncle Frank and his Aunt Kate to see if he could stay with them during the summer months" stretches across the board, students should have the knack of expansion technique.

An example of sentence expansion follows.

Kernel sentence:	The men ate.
Direction (1)	Expand to show the occupations of the men.
Possible answer:	The judges and lawyers ate.
Direction (2)	Expand to show how the men ate.
Possible answer:	The judges and lawyers ate slowly.
Direction (3)	Expand to show why they ate that way.
Possible answer:	The judges and lawyers, who took only twenty minutes for lunch yesterday, ate slowly today because they were not in a hurry to get back to work.
Direction (4)	Expand to show what the men did yesterday.
Possible answer:	The judges and lawyers, who took only twenty minutes for lunch yesterday, ate slowly today because they were not in a hurry to get back to work.
Direction (5)	Expand to show why the men did what they did yesterday.
Possible answer:	The judges and lawyers, who yesterday took only twenty minutes for lunch because of the importance of the case, ate slowly today because they were not in a hurry to get back to work.

5. SENTENCE COMBINING

Sentence combining is useful in working with larger structures and in handling pronoun-antecedent relationships through a long sentence. The premise is simple. Students are given two or more short, related, complete sentences and asked to combine them into longer, complete, correct sentences. Doing this helps develop an understanding and fluency in the use of subordination and coordination to show relationships such as sequence, cause-effect, and so on. Individual or small-group work on sentence combining will come after explanations and group practice.

Here are some examples:

(1) Frank stood at the edge of the board. (,)
Frank took a deep breath. (, and)
Frank tensed each muscle.
Frank sprang high in the air. (,)
Frank pointed downward. (, and)
Frank shot into the water below.

Here the primary purpose is to inculcate the use of a single subject with a series of verbs set off by commas and "and." Incidentally, the student should be developing mature writing habits by dropping the repeated subject word.

(2) Mother smiled.
I passed everything. (because)

(3) The audience booed violently.
The villain came on stage. (when)

Items such as 2 and 3, with their exact instructions and rigidly predictable outcomes, are useful for the practice of specific structures.

(4) Here is an exercise which can be made hard or easy, as the class needs:

a. A building was on fire.
b. Flames shot up through the roof.
c. The building was abandoned.

d. A man was walking his dog.
e. He saw the fire.
f. He ran to the alarm box.
g. He called the fire department.
h. Five minutes passed.
i. There was a loud wail of sirens.
j. Trucks and firemen filled the street.

The easiest assignment is to put sentences a-d into one sentence; e-g into a second; and h-j into a third. The next step will be to make the three sentences into two. The hardest, really quite demanding, would be to put all the essentials into one sentence. And it can be made even more demanding, at every level, if the short sentences to be combined are listed out of order and the students have to arrange them sequentially first and then rewrite them.

That is one of the great virtues of sentence combining; its adaptability to the level at which the student is currently writing. Exercises can be planned to practice the particular kinds of combinations in which students need practice. It's fun to do, and it remains fun while it teaches. The teacher just has to make sure that the exercises are purposeful as well as enjoyable.

6. DICTATION

Many of the written errors, which seem to indicate a lack of familiarity with what constitutes a sentence, are really nothing more than punctuation problems. Diagnosis of these problems and their remediation are best undertaken through the use of dictation.

Dictation is a useful technique for developing sentence sense in those students who ramble on or punctuate erratically.

In selecting an effective passage for dictation, consider the reading level of your group but give even more weight to the interest level. This may be a section of a story the students are reading.

The passage read can also serve as a model to demonstrate a particular writing technique you have taught, such as the use of physical detail or parallel structure.

To begin, type the paragraph eliminating all beginning capitals and end punctuation. Hand out a copy to each of the students who needs to improve his/her sentence sense. Ask the students to capitalize and punctuate as you dictate. Your intonation should be the guide to the students, so that they know when and how to end the sentence and when to capitalize to indicate the beginning of a new sentence.

If your students are more advanced, you can use a more complete dictation in which the student has to write every word. Since dictation is unfamiliar within the context of most English classrooms, you need to prepare your students fully before you begin to dictate.

7. TRANSITIONS

A frequently noticed characteristic of prose of inexperienced writers is the abrupt movement from one thought to another. This jarring effect may distract readers and sometimes creates a puzzle they cannot solve. The teacher who notes such a need for linking devices by writing "trans. needed" does little to help solve the problem.

Students have to learn not only appropriate transitional words and phrases but the use of repetition and parallel structure as important linking devices.

The customary store of "transition words" makes for artificial and pretentious writing, with transition words being overused unless chosen with experience and discretion.

Practice with samples such as these may make for more natural writing:

(1) I couldn't go fishing. It rained.

Combine with the following transitional words, according to what you want to say: until, unless, since, even though, because.

A more difficult assignment is to make a logical paragraph out of the following sentences by arranging the ideas in logical order, and by combining some of these very short sentences through the use of appropriate words.

(2) This book is dumb. A chemist can't detect arsenic in a cup of coffee. I like to read mysteries. Some mysteries are disappointing. I read all the mysteries I can.

8. PUNCTUATION

Written English needs punctuation as a substitute for intonation, pause, and other vocal devices that help clarify meaning. Punctuation is essentially a set of signals showing how to read the flow of words as the speaker would say them.

9. TERMINAL PUNCTUATION MARKS

The most serious mishandling usually occurs with the terminal punctuation marks: the period, the exclamation mark, and the question mark. The key problem here is the student's misconception of where one sentence is to end and the next to begin. When the student misplaces marks, there is essentially a sentence-sense problem, and the placing of those marks should improve as the student's feel for the integrity of the sentence grows. (See the section on "Sentence Sense" in this chapter.)

When terminal marks are omitted out of carelessness, proofreading will eliminate most of the problem. It is sometimes helpful for students to read their own papers aloud, so that they can use oral clues to determine where punctuation belongs.

For those students who use the comma to splice together two sentences, introduce (or re-introduce) the semicolon as one of the coordinating devices.

10. CAPITALIZATION

Since we are not concerned at the moment with producing grammarians, the key capitalization errors observed in student writing provide the focus, while lesser errors take a back seat. Of course, draw attention to the lack of a capital at the beginning of a sentence, in the personal pronoun "I," and in proper names. Random capitalization of common nouns should be corrected. It often comes from lack of knowledge of the correct upper and lower case forms. A wall chart for reference may be useful.

One method of teaching generalized rules might be a class project of a one-page style sheet, modeled on one used by a major newspaper or press association or by the Columbia Scholastic Press Association.

11. COMMAS

Student problems with the comma are usually signs of omission rather than commission, with the exception of the use of the comma as a period. (See terminal punctuation in this chapter.)

To get students actively involved in using commas, the teacher prepares rexo sheets for a passage which is correct in all respects but lacks those commas that correspond to several observed student trouble spots. A typical passage might have several instances of the most urgent uses of the comma: items in series and coordinating conjunctions joining main clauses. As the teacher reads the passage aloud, using intonation and pauses to suggest comma placement, students insert commas. The class discussion and final decision on the placement of the commas are to be a discovery situation where students become aware of the reasons for the placement of each comma.

12. SPELLING

The key to improvement in this area is the recognition by the student of the value of correct spelling. Basic motivation is "publication' of student writing; writing of letters, real letters to be mailed: posting on class bulletin boards, etc.

Provide an editing and proofreading session following every writing session. During this time, dictionaries, thesauruses, stylebooks, etc. are available and students may use one another and the teacher as resources.

After the revised paper is turned in for evaluation or duplication, it is more helpful to the weaker speller for the teacher to supply the correct spelling than to

12. SPELLING (Continued)

determine the particular kinds of errors the student has been making and to choose the remediation that will be most effective.

It may soon be apparent that the individual spelling errors can be grouped and tackled by learning a particular generalization.

To insure the use of the individual lists, assign practice sessions where the pupils will choose partners and check each other.

Student miswritings stem from (a) indifferent attitude or lack of motivation, (b) lack of visual focus or discrimination, (c) auditory problems and/or ignorance of sound-symbol relationship, or use of a phonetic spelling when it doesn't apply, (d) word confusion, (e) variant usage or syntax, (f) handwriting difficulties.

In general small doses of spelling work with frequent reviews are better than massive assaults on lists. The student's own personal spelling checklist for use in proofreading can be an important tool. The student, after all, must be made to realize that spelling is important -- not so that lists may be mastered or for use in spelling bees but for real improvement in the readability of his or her written work.

Frank Smith makes a case against using spelling lists. "The thousands of words that most of us can spell were not learned ten at a time from word lists in our workbooks but as a consequence of meaningful writing. Just as we learn to recognize words and their meaning through reading them, so we learn to spell words and to use them meaningfully through writing." *

The chart on pp.69-72 may give guidance on specific remedial activities.

*Smith, Frank. Reading Without Nonsense

13. HANDWRITING

Communication is blocked and students experience real frustration when their writing is illegible. Sometimes illegible handwriting is a screen used by the insecure writer to "hide" from the reader. In such cases, the handwriting often improves as the fear of writing lessens.

Many students would like help in overcoming handwriting problems; yet most secondary school pupils seem reluctant to ask for or be seen getting "penmanship" lessons. And many secondary school teachers feel unprepared to offer such help. Some of the following are suggestions which even such reluctant students might appreciate.

(1) Post wall charts and suggest that students pick out and work on those letters that give them the most trouble. Indicate that any legible approximation of a chart letter is acceptable.

(2) Distribute a guide sheet and suggest that pupils use these for private reference in the classroom and at home.

(3) Suggest using lined paper and experimenting with various writing utensils (soft lead as opposed to hard lead, thick ballpoint as opposed to thin felt tip).

(4) Advise individuals about special problems such as leaving more space between words, closing up a's and o's, or linking str; and suggest a practice drill or two, possibly using the individual guide sheet for tracing.

(5) Spot and work with youngsters who frequently use capital letters in the middle of words and/or who start words with capitals where none is needed. These students may have trouble forming lower case letters, or they may have developed the habit of using capital letters inappropriately. Some may need help in learning when to use upper

13. HANDWRITING (Continued)

and lower case letters. Some actually do not know which is the proper upper or lower case form of particular letters. A wall chart may be useful.

(See section on Capitalization, p.63.)

(6) Set aside time for proofreading after every writing session.

private reference in the classroom and at home.

(3) Suggest using lined paper and experimenting with various writing utensils (soft lead as opposed to hard lead, thick ballpoint as opposed to thin felt tip).

(4) Advise individuals about special problems such as leaving more space between words, closing up a's and o's, or linking str; and suggest a practice drill or two, possibly using the individual guide sheet for tracing.

(5) Spot and work with youngsters who frequently use capital letters in the middle of words and/or who start words with capitals where none is needed. These students may have trouble forming lower case letters, or they may have developed the habit of using capital letters inappropriately. Some may need help in learning when to use upper and lower case letters. Some do not actually know which is the proper upper or lower case form of particular letters. A wall chart may be useful. (See section on Capitalization on p. 65.)

(6) Set aside time for proofreading after every writing session.

GUIDE FOR INDIVIDUALIZED REMEDIATION IN MECHANICS

Symptom	Possible Cause	Possible Remedy
Same word spelled correctly and misspelled on student's paper (s)	- lack of spelling awareness - lack of spelling motivation - too much speed in composing - failure to proofread	1. Motivate and develop awareness through "publication" (pen pal, peer reading, bulletin board, scrapbook, class magazine). 2. Instruct in skill of proofreading through groups, pairing, alone. 3. Set aside time and establish routine of proofreading after each composing and/or revising session.
Word(s) misspelled though correct spelling available in written assignment	- poor eyesight (farsighted or astigmatism) - failure to focus - lack of visual discrimination - carelessness	1. Check and refer to doctor. 2. Visual tracking (letter by letter comparison) 3. Practice copying words, phrases, sentences, followed by proofreading.
Misspelling of simple common words becaus for because docter for doctor stil for still wich for which	- not enough reading/writing in English - failure to focus - lack of visual memory	1. Ask student to locate word (in newspaper or textbook) and focus on word. 2. Isolate problem area. 3. Copy on card file. 4. Memorize spelling by tracing, visualizing, writing in air, writing on paper from memory. (Games such as crossword puzzles, Scrabble, anagrams supply kinesthetic and tactile reinforcement)
bin for been gon for gone	- phonetic spelling applied to non-phonetic word	5. All of the above plus dictation of sentences containing word (by peer, cassette).

Symptom	Possible Cause	Possible Remedy
gril for girl retrop for report snigle for singles feats for feast	- reversals may be due to confusion in sequencing	1. Establish left and right margins (red and green) and an arrow pointing right. 2. Practice reading and writing for correct visual image. 3. Crossword puzzles, Scrabble, anagrams, for tactile and kinesthetic reinforcement
Misspelling of word when sound corresponds with its symbol		
hop for hope	- unaware of patterns and/or generalization	a. In vowel/consonant (it) or consonant/vowel/consonant (hat) clusters, the sound of the vowel is usually short. In consonant/vowel (no) or vowel/consonant plus silent e, (ate or hope) the sound of the vowel is usually long.
no for know new for knew	- lack of awareness of variety of ways same sound can be spelled in English	b. Starting with sample from student paper, lead students to discern phonetic generalization or pattern: n=n, mn, pn, kn, gn.
dinning for dining comming for coming	- unaware of generalization	c. Teach correct patterns for adding suffix starting with a vowel.
pin for pen correck for correct aks for ask	- variation in pronunciation - dialect deviation	Demonstrate pronunciation from which spelling is derived. Isolate problem area. Give practice writing from dictation and in copying. Follow up each with immediate self-correction.
atheletic for athletic libery for library	- poor auditory memory	

Symptom	Possible Cause	Possible Remedy
Misspelling of particular spelling "demons": recieve for receive marrage for marriage	- lack of knowledge - carelessness	1. Develop habit of underlining doubtful spellings and referring to dictionary or other resource during editing and proofreading. 2. Learn appropriate generalization. E.G., (a) "i" before "e" except after "c" or when sounded like "a", etc.; (b) when adding a suffix starting with a vowel other than "i", change "y" to "i" in words ending in "y" preceded by a consonant. Models: marry marriage monkey monkeys marry marrying
Similar words confused an for and were for where thing for think	- confusion of words similar in sound - faulty auditory discrimination or focus - confusion about differences in meaning	1. Point out differences in pronunciation and clarify visual differences. 2. Point out differences of meaning and usage. 3. Support with mnemonic devices.
Confusion of particular homophones: add,ad; there,their, they're; too, to, two; no,know; real, reel for-for four whether for weather you're for your cent for sent whole for hole meet for meat	- lack of knowledge - memory failure	1. Teach differences of meaning . 2. Support with mnemonic devices (no,never, nada; know-know-how, knowledge). 3. Puns/jokes "The little pig thought his father was a boar." 4. Derivations (cent - century, centur)

Symptom	Possible Cause	Possible Remedy
Misspelling of derivatives sincerly for sincerely mispell for misspell elegible for illegible ment for meant critisize for criticize ratial for racial sine for sign bom for bomb	- failure to use structural analysis as an aid	1. Instruct on finding root and dividing into root and parts. 2. Teach generalization on adding affixes. 3. Learn families of related words: mean, meaning, meant; critic, critical, criticize; sign, signature; bomb, bombard.
Misspellings that stem from syntax walk for walked use for used	- unfamiliarity with grammatical form - inconsistency of sound represented by the same letters e.g. walked = wawkt hugged = hudg mended = mendid	1. Focus on problems. 2. Instruct in use of meaning clues (e.g. yesterday..). 3. Develop mnemonic devices, e.g., chart for 3rd person singular. S-boy walk(s) Pl-boy(s) walk
could of for could have	- pronunciation slur; unfamiliarity with grammatical form	4. Proofreading practice with checklist
walk for walks	- dialectical difference	
Grammatical convention violated ten assistant all direction a results	- variation of grammatical conventions for marking plural nouns - ignorance of inflectional suffix that makes a word plural	Clear up confusion about affix that indicates plural.
Handwriting Apparent misspelling of words with same letter(s) ("k" looks like "le") Idiosyncratic and/or erratic capitalization, particularly in middle of word	- poor formation of particular letter(s) in particular context - ignorance and/or need for practice - handwriting problem 1. lack of awareness of differences 2. lack of practice in differentiating between capital and lower case letter(s) 3. confusion between cursive writing and manuscript 4. ignorance of appropriate use	Individualized instruction and practice in formation of confusing letter(s) 1. Teacher board writing should distinguish upper and lower case. 2. Individualized instruction and practice in differentiating 3. Individual guide sheet for copying, tracing

Appendix

NEW YORK STATE PRELIMINARY COMPETENCY TEST IN

WRITING

TRAINING SAMPLES

TO THE STUDENT

This is a test to find out how well you write. The test has three parts: a letter, a report, and a composition.

For each part, you must do the following:

1. Write your answer first on scrap paper.
2. Read carefully what you have written.
3. Make any changes or corrections that will improve your answer.
4. Write your final answer on the paper given to you by the teacher.

TAKE ALL THE TIME YOU NEED TO ANSWER THE THREE PARTS. Work carefully. Double check everything you have written on your final copy. You must hand in the scrap paper for each answer along with the final answer paper.

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK
THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12234

BUSINESS LETTER

Read the advertisement below.

Green jade or brown tigerseye stone suspended within gold-plated heart. Necklace complete with 18" 14K gold-plated chain. Free catalog with purchase. Money-back guarantee. Allow 2-3 weeks for delivery. $3.98 plus 50¢ postage & handling.

BOX O' ROX
P.O. Box 1261, Treehaven, N. H. 04567

Write a business letter ordering ONE of these necklaces for yourself or a friend.

When you write your business letter, be sure to

- Plan what you will write
- Give the company all the information it will need to fill your order
- Use an acceptable business letter form
- Write complete sentences
- Check your spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and usage

REPORT

1. Read all of this question before you start to write.

2. You have been asked to look up some information on the Mayan Indians of Central America and write a brief report for your social studies class. You took the notes included in the box below.

NOTES
Ruins of large cities of stone still remain
Mainly in southern Mexico and Guatemala
Studied moon, planets, stars
Played a kind of ball game on stone courts
Corn, other crops raised for food
Kingdoms about 300 A.D. to 1300 A.D.
Had picture writing
Way of life gone before Columbus came to America

3. Arrange and develop these notes into a report.

4. In your report be sure to:

   - Include all the information that is in the notes
   - Arrange the information according to a plan
   - Write complete sentences
   - Follow the rules for sentence structure, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and usage

COMPOSITION

1. The principal of your school is deciding whether or not to have a fast-food lunch program (similar to McDonald's) started in your school. The principal wants the opinion of each student. Decide whether you prefer the fast-food program or whether you prefer the lunch program you have in your school now. Write a composition of at least 150 words explaining your choice to the principal. Keep in mind that the purpose of your composition is to persuade the principal to choose the lunch program you prefer. Give at least two reasons for your choice. Explain each reason.

2. Since the purpose of your composition is to persuade the principal to agree with you, be sure to:

   - State your opinion clearly
   - Explain your reasons carefully
   - Follow the rules for paragraphing, sentence structure, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and usage

BASIC COMPETENCY TEST

IN

WRITING SKILLS

Wednesday, January 24, 1979 — 9:15 a.m.

DIRECTIONS

This is a test of some of the things adults need to know in order to write ideas so that other people can understand them. The test will ask you to show what you know about spelling, choosing words, punctuation, and capitalization. You will also be asked to write some sentences, two paragraphs, and a letter.

Be sure to read the directions and study the sample answers carefully before you answer the questions. Write all your answers in the spaces that are provided in the separate answer booklet.

When you have finished the test, you must sign the declaration which states that you did not see any of the questions or answers before the test and that you have neither given nor received help in answering any of the questions during the test. Your answer booklet cannot be accepted if you fail to sign this declaration.

Restrictions

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The University of the State of New York

Part I—Spelling

You have already taken this part of the test.

Part II—Mechanics

Directions (11–15): Choose the best word or group of words to fill each blank and copy it *carefully* in the space provided in the separate answer booklet. [5]

Sample: These plants _____ slowly.

grow
grows
grown
grewed

The correct answer, *grow*, is written in your answer booklet. Write your answers to questions 11 through 15 in the answer booklet as shown in the sample.

11 Did you drop _____ box of nails?

this here
that there
those
that

12 I _____ last weekend.

never went no place
did not go nowhere
did not go anywhere
never went nowhere

13 Bus fares have _____ recently.

risen
rised
rose
raised

14 Susan is the girl _____ was visiting us.

which
who
whom
whose

15 _____ needs soap and water.

To wash, a person
To, wash a person
To wash a person,
To wash, a person,

Directions (16–20): In each of the following sentences a capital letter is missing. Choose the *one* of the four words that needs a capital letter in that sentence and copy that word *carefully* in the space provided in the separate answer booklet. [5]

Sample: One day susan told us this story.

Day
Susan
Told
Story

The correct answer, *Susan*, is written in your answer booklet. Write your answers to questions 16 through 20 in the answer booklet as shown in the sample.

16 In many areas, tulips bloom in the month of may.

Areas
Tulips
Month
May

17 That station wagon has prestone antifreeze in its radiator.

Station
Wagon
Prestone
Radiator

18 The republicans held their convention to select a candidate for the election.

Republicans
Convention
Candidate
Election

19 The owner of that mexican restaurant wants to hire a new cook.

Owner
Mexican
Restaurant
Cook

20 I believe uncle Frank is taking a business course at a college near his home.

Uncle
Business
College
Home

Part III—Sentence Writing

Directions (21–30): Each question below is a word or group of words to be used in a sentence. In the space provided in the separate answer booklet, write a complete sentence using the word or the group of words correctly. Keep each word group together as it is in the sample. [20]

Sample: in front of I walked in front of the car.

This sentence using the words *in front of* is also written in your answer booklet. Write your answers to questions 21 through 30 in the answer booklet as shown in the sample. Be sure to use punctuation marks and capital letters whenever they are needed.

21 nurse

22 when we are

23 advised them

24 useful

25 angry about

26 hardly anybody

27 seriously

28 handed him

29 above you

30 quite late

☞ GO RIGHT ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

Part IV — Writing About A Picture

Directions: In the space provided on page b of the separate answer booklet, you are to write a paragraph about the picture below. If you wish, you may write a practice paragraph on scrap paper or in any blank space in this test booklet, and then copy it in your answer booklet. [20]

1 Look at the picture below. Look at the people in the picture.

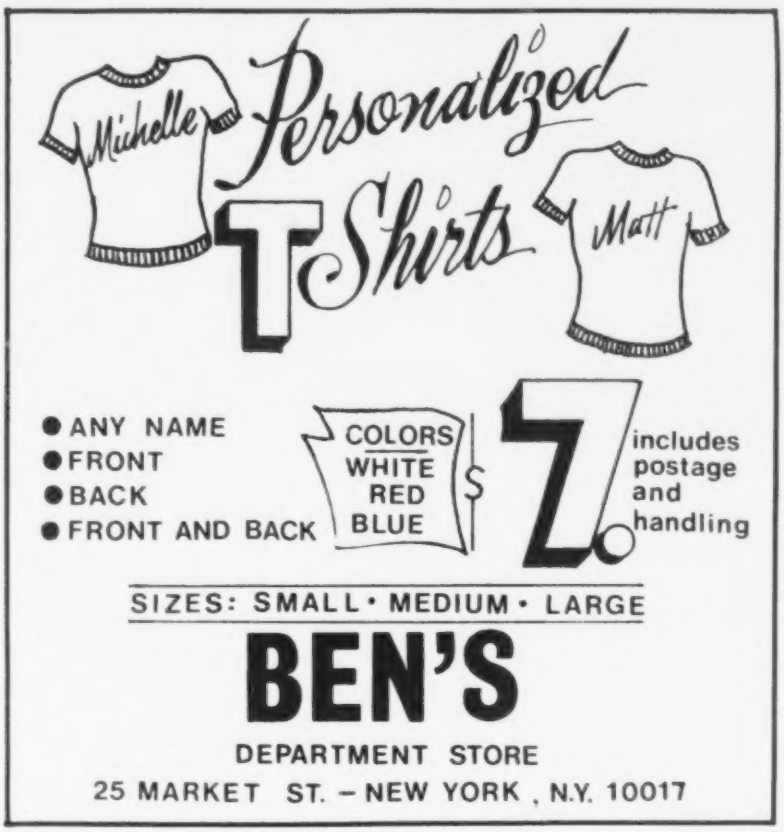
William E. Sauro/NYT Pictures

2 Write a paragraph of 5 or more complete sentences reporting what is happening in the picture.

Part V — Letter

Directions: In the space provided on page c of the separate answer booklet, you are to write a letter as indicated below. If you wish, you may write a practice letter on scrap paper or in any blank space in this test booklet, and then copy it in your answer booklet. [20]

1 Read the advertisement below.



2 Write a complete business letter ordering a personalized T-shirt for yourself. You want your name on the front. Tell whether you are sending a money order or a check. Make sure you give the department store all the information it will need so that the T-shirt you want will get to you. In writing the letter, be sure to use a correct form for a business letter.

☞ GO RIGHT ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

Part VI — Paragraph

Directions: In the space provided on page d of the separate answer booklet, write a paragraph on the situation below. If you wish, you may write a practice paragraph on scrap paper or in any blank space in this test booklet, and then copy it in your answer booklet. [20]

Situation

Your class has been talking about the things that people notice when they are first trying to decide what a new person is like. The class has talked about:

1 A person's way of dressing
2 A person's way of speaking
3 A person's sense of humor

Choose *one* of these three things the class has talked about. Tell how important it is to you in deciding what a new person is like. Write a paragraph of 5 or more complete sentences explaining your choice.

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